

County of Sumter
Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
2011 Incentive Review and Recommendation Report

I. Background Information:

On July 13, 2010, eleven members and two alternates were appointed to the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) by the Sumter County Board of County Commissioners. The members all meet Section 420.9076, Florida Statute requirements. The AHAC agreed to meet the second Thursday of each month and to prepare recommendations to the Board of Sumter County Commissioners by December 30, 2011. The committee reviewed the statutorily mandated incentive items at the October 13, 2011 AHAC meeting. Brad Cornelius, Director of Planning and Development, provided an overview and update of each housing incentive.

II. Public Hearing:

A public hearing was held on November 10, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 142 of the Sumter County Government Offices located at 910 North Main Street, Bushnell, FL, 33513. A legal ad was placed in the Villages Daily Sun newspaper on November 4, 2011 and public notices were posted at the entrance to the Sumter County Government Annex Offices.

III. Incentives & Recommendations:

Incentive A: The processing of approvals of development orders or permits, as defined in Section 163.3164(7) and (8), Florida Statutes, for affordable housing projects is expedited to a greater degree than other projects.

Review Synopsis: There are measures in place for affordable housing. Residential permits are being processed between one to two days after request is submitted. Sumter County is now offering electronic online permitting.

Recommendation: Permits are being issued within a reasonable time frame and committee members have not incurred any problems with the current process, the AHAC voted unanimously to make no improvements or changes at this time.

Board Action:

Incentive B: The modification of impact-fee requirements, including reduction or waiver of fees and alternative methods of fee payment for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: Brad Cornelius gave a brief overview of the current impact fees. The current rates are \$2,600 for residential, \$397 for fire with no fee for schools, utility fees or libraries for the county. Mr. Cornelius confirmed the road impact fee study has been completed. Staff considered, and used as a part of the analysis, the reduction of or eliminating the impact fees for affordable housing projects. However, the determination was made by the Board of Sumter County Commissioners (BOCC) not to provide a reduced rate for affordable housing projects. It was not adopted as a part of the county's impact fee ordinance. The impact fee ordinance is now a consumption-based ordinance with a unified rate throughout the county. The BOCC did approve the ability for a non-profit organization to obtain a waiver of impact fees with limitations. If the non-profit organization is developing a property with a maximum of 5,000 square feet; is the owner of the property; and will be using the property for a period of three years, the road and fire impact fees can be waived. The fees are paid by the general fund on behalf of the non-profit. This requires an agreement to be executed by the BOCC and the non-profit entity. The county is also moving forward with removing the traffic concurrence from the development process. Therefore, the requirement of a traffic study is eliminated which saves the developers money upfront as well as eliminates mitigation. The county will continue maintaining the road impact fee program which allows the county to pay for roadway improvements. This will allow the county to work with developers through cooperative agreements since the roadways are important to the development projects. Jacqueline Smith commented about Orange, Marion and Lake Counties reducing or waiving the impact fees for new construction as a way to get affordable housing within their counties. Diana Couillard added she is looking at affordable housing for the working class individuals, not developers. Furthermore, the other counties have waived the impact fees for a limited time due to the economic crisis as this helps the homeowner come up with less money for down payment and closing costs. Mrs. Couillard stated she would like to see the county waive the impact fees for affordable housing, not just the projects under the Housing Department, but any new construction. Mrs. Couillard continued with stating the other counties were able to afford the reduction. Mr. Cornelius stated when comparison is used between Sumter and the other counties; you have to look at the difference between the counties and the road programs. Mr. Cornelius continued stating that according to the Lake Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization, the region wide planning organization for Lake and Sumter counties, Sumter County is in a much better position than Lake County in terms of meeting the roadway network demands. Lake County is in a negative position related to those issues. Mrs. Couillard commented Lake County still lower the fees even under these circumstances. Mr. Cornelius replied lowering or waiving the fees does not help a development but it would help affordable housing as it lowers the cost of the construction. Diana Couillard stated the county is looking at this as a developer, which Brad Cornelius replied he has to look at the issue on a global level. Ms. Smith commented on the difference

between Sumter and Lake's income guidelines. Ms. Watson questioned Mr. Cornelius on the Webster Homes In Partnership project, wondering if they fit the criteria for the general fund to pay the impact fees. However, Mr. Cornelius stated that project would not qualify for the funds to be waived as they sell the properties after construction instead of owning them for three years. Mr. Cole stated he attended the BOCC workshop when this issue was discussed and he doesn't think they are going to change their minds. Mr. Cole feels they gave a clear indication and unless the committee can show a change in circumstances the impact fees are not going to be reduced or waived. Brad Cornelius further stated the county would have to reimburse the fund if the fees were waived for affordable housing projects. The reimbursement would come from the general fund which is, as every county, extremely tight. Mrs. Coulliard stated again she would like for the Commissioners to look at waiving these fees due to the length of the economic crisis. Mr. Cornelius responded by saying the Commissioners did discuss this issue recently and they decided the fees were not going to be waived. . Each city can have additional fees over and above the county. Diana Coulliard requested a motion to be made for the impact fees to be waived.

Recommendation: The AHAC unanimously approved a motion to recommend the Board of County Commissioners revisit the impact fee issue in respect to affordable housing for at least on a temporary basis given the continuing economic downturn.

Board Action:

Incentive C: The allowance of flexibility in densities for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: Mr. Cornelius stated the maximum density within the unincorporated county is still 8 units per acre which is under the mixed land use for the zoning districts. However, the county has in place inter-local agreements with four of the five cities. The City of Coleman is the only one without an agreement. As part of these agreements, the county is encouraging development within the cities and within an area around the cities. There are boundaries around the cities that are future urban development or future annexation areas which vary by city. The county is promoting people to develop within those boundaries. It is those areas we can achieve urban densities. The City of Wildwood's comprehensive plan has 20 units per acre. The City of Bushnell also has higher densities than the unincorporated county under their newly adopted plan. Both of those cities are pushing for higher densities because they have utility plans in place or are moving forward to provide those utilities. The county is going forth with a program to promote those additional densities in cooperation with the cities. This issue will continue being assessed as the county updates the countywide comprehensive plan. The county will continue to review opportunities to provide for that flexibility. Therefore, the change has been; instead of joint plan decisions being underway, they are now in place.

Recommendation: The committee recommends no improvements or change at this time. The motion carried unanimously.

Board Action:

Incentive D: The reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for very-low-income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons.

Review Synopsis: Mr. Cornelius stated this has not changed except the county now has inter-local agreements with four of the five cities. The county is not a utility provider; all of those services are provided by the cities or private utility companies. However, the BOCC is asking the legislative delegation for potential funding next year to do a feasibility study to bring sewer into Lake Panasoffkee starting with the commercial corridor and the second phase possibly moving into residential. The reason behind this decision is based on environmental protection and impacts to Lake Panasoffkee by protecting that investment made by the state and county. Mrs. Couillard added the septic tank situation in Lake Panasoffkee is not good.

Recommendation: The AHAC voted unanimously to support the current work being done on interlocal agreements by County staff. No improvements or changes are recommended at this time.

Board Action:

Incentive E: The allowance of affordable accessory residential units in residential zoning districts.

Review Synopsis: Brad Cornelius stated there has been no change; the county still provides the opportunity for a temporary use permit for caregiver or care receivers as well as a family accessory cottages. There is also the lineal transfer provision for individuals providing land to family members. Under this provision, the existing land owner must have a minimum of two acres after the transfer for the agriculture area and one acre in the rural residential area.

Recommendation: The committee recommends no improvements or changes at this time. The motion carried unanimously.

Board Action:

Incentive F: The reduction of parking and setback requirements for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: The code provides the flexibility to allow for the administrative ability to deviate from the minimum standards for parking for any type of project. There is no flexibility for the set back requirements based on a type of project. However, the county does have the ability to deviate based on the existing set-back lines already established within an area. Staff has reviewed changing how the county looks at set-backs from road type to zoning district type. This will continue to be reviewed as part of the comprehensive plan update.

Recommendation: The committee recommends no improvements or changes at this time. The motion carried unanimously.

Board Action:

Incentive G: The allowance of flexible lot configurations, including zero-lot-line configurations, for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: An individual can voluntary request these types of set-ups through the residential planning development process. The plan will be reviewed by the Zoning and Adjustment board as well as the BOCC for approval.

Recommendation: The committee recommends no improvements or changes at this time. The motion carried unanimously.

Board Action:

Incentive H: The modification of street requirements for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: Street requirements are continuously reviewed by the county. The Public Works department has analyzed what the appropriate standards for roadways are within the county's network. There are no specific measures in place for affordable housing; however, there is an ability through the master plan development process to propose alternative street requirements. Currently, the county meets the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) standards.

Recommendation: The committee recommends no improvements or changes at this time. The motion carried unanimously.

Board Action:

Incentive I: The establishment of a process by which a local government considers, before adoption, policies, procedures, ordinances, regulations, or plan provisions that increase the cost of housing.

Review Synopsis: There has been no change. Staff does take housing into consideration when making future plans for the county. Housing staff reviews the agenda for the Board of County Commissioners' meetings. If there are any items that may impact affordable housing, it is brought to the attention of the Division Director prior to the meeting date for discussion and recommendations.

Recommendation: The committee recommends no improvements or changes at this time. The motion carried unanimously

Board Action:

Incentive J: The preparation of a printed inventory of locally owned public lands suitable for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: Mr. Cornelius informed the committee, the BOCC has a realtor/broker under contract to broker and sell properties that the BOCC takes ownership of, particularly properties related to code. When the BOCC forecloses on the code property, the county takes ownership, sells it and the net proceeds go into the Affordable Housing fund. Currently, there are quite a few code properties ready to go into foreclosure. Mr. Schick asked how long it the broker's contract expired. It was decided staff will research and provide Mr. Schick an answer after the meeting. The broker is Danny Smith with Smith, Smith Realty. Staff does keep a record of all properties owned by the county.

Recommendation: The committee recommends no improvements or changes at this time. The motion carried unanimously

Board Action:

Incentive K: The support of development near transportation hubs and major employment centers and mixed-used developments.

Review Synopsis: The County is encouraging and supports these developments by the inter-local agreements with the cities. Brad Cornelius began explaining the two primary economic corridors that the Board of County Commissioners has adopted and encouraging job creation in. The first corridor is SR 44 from I-75 to US 301. This is the primary job growth corridor that has been indentified by the county and has been named the Florida Crossroads Industrial Activity Center. The corridor has been identified with the regional economic development plan, gone to the US economic development administrative, been approved and is now identified through the

federal government as a vital economic development project for the region. A formal designation through the federal government puts the corridor in place for grants and other funding assistance opportunities to make the plan a reality. The two major property owners within this corridor, Monarch Ranch and Sumter LLC Lee Capital, have industrial land use already in place for the property. Monarch Ranch has 3,000 acres with a potential of 16 million of square feet for industrial uses. The concept for that project which lies south of the turnpike between I-75 and the rail line is to develop an inland port. This will provide a facility that will tie to the CSX rail line which is a major rail line in the State of Florida. Ms. Couillard asked if there were wetlands located within the property. Mr. Cornelius stated there are quite a bit of wetlands; about a quarter of the property has been committed to be put in a conservation easement for the wetlands tied directly to Lake Panasoffkee. The other wetlands on the property will be mitigated through the normal process. Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as well as the water management district has reviewed and agreed with this approach. The county is also working with DOT because part of the plan is to establish a new interchange at CR 514. Part of the developer's concept is to put an interchange at CR 514 and I-75, run a new parallel road to US 301 to the north and then connect to SR 44. Discussions were under way with DOT about the interchange; however, there are several studies that have to be done prior to approval. With no money, the county has approached the property owner to pay these costs. If the owner is willing to pay the costs the studies can possibly be completed over the next two years. Mrs. Couillard asked if the City of Coleman is aware of the proposed plans. Brad Cornelius replied that the city is aware of the plans as all of these road projects went through the MPO process which Coleman is a part of. Mr. Cornelius stated he was also aware the City of Coleman did a public records request to the MPO asking for the information. Mr. Cornelius continued with the second corridor located at CR 470 and I-75 to US 301. The county is promoting these corridors for job growth which ties to this incentive because it also promotes residential developments to support the job base. The BOCC has discussed Sumterville becoming more intensive in terms of this development by bringing more housing opportunities into the area. Mrs. Couillard added United Agriculture Services business in Lake Panasoffkee is just bursting at the seams. Mr. Cornelius stated he was surprised to learn this business was world wide. Ms. Watson asked what this business is. Mrs. Couillard explained United Agriculture produces organic natural fertilizer which is amazing. Mr. Cornelius informed the committee those are the updates on all the housing incentives which concluded this summarization.

Recommendation: The committee recommends no improvements or changes at this time. The motion carried unanimously

Board Action:

IV. Additional Recommendations:

1. The AHAC committee did not have any additional recommendations for the Board of Sumter County Commissioners at this time.